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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 CAIRO 000822

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/ELA, AF/SPG

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/10/2019  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [PREF](#) [SU](#) [CD](#) [EG](#)  
SUBJECT: S/E GRATION MEETS WITH EGYPTIAN OFFICIALS ON SUDAN

REF: A. 08 CAIRO 1794  
[1](#)B. 08 CAIRO 1963  
[1](#)C. CAIRO 532  
[1](#)D. CAIRO 415

Classified By: Ambassador Margaret Scobey for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Key Points

-- U.S. Special Envoy (S/E) for Sudan General Gration met in separate meetings on April 30 with Egyptian General Intelligence Services (EGIS) Chief Soliman and Egyptian Foreign Minister Aboul Gheit to explain his vision for Sudan and enlist Egypt's support and cooperation in resolving the crises in Sudan.

-- Gration explained to the Egyptian leaders that the "urgent issue" was to get an interim ceasefire in Darfur to increase humanitarian assistance and allow the Darfuri groups to focus on peace talks that would lead to a political solution.

-- Gration told the Egyptians that after taking care of the urgent issue, he wants to focus on the "important issue" of CPA implementation, and the resolution of North-South issues.

-- Both Soliman and Aboul Gheit stressed that Government of Egypt (GOE) is concerned about the stability and unity of Sudan. They told to S/E Gration that Egypt is using development assistance in South Sudan to encourage unity.

-- On Darfur, Soliman said the current peace process should not focus on Khalil Ibrahim because Egypt does not want to see another version of Abuja. Aboul Gheit asked S/E Gration to restrain Doha because the Qataris are "rich guys" that don't understand Sudan.

-- Aboul Gheit said that Egypt recently sent 60 doctors to Darfur, and was working to fill the gap left by the expulsion of the 13 international NGOs.

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Gration Explains Urgent and Important Issues in Sudan  
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[1](#)2. (C) S/E Gration explained to the EGIS Chief and Egyptian FM in separate meetings on April 30 that the "urgent issue" in Sudan was to negotiate an interim ceasefire in Darfur. He told the Egyptian leaders that he met with Qatari and Libyan officials in Doha to broker an interim ceasefire between Chad and Sudan, and he was hoping to get Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) leader Khalil Ibrahim to go to Doha to enter into talks with Government of Sudan (GOS) officials. Gration stated that an interim ceasefire would allow for an increase in humanitarian assistance. A ceasefire would also deemphasize guns, could be incentivized with development assistance, and would allow the Darfuri groups to focus on a peace talks that would lead to a political solution to the crisis, including terms for a final ceasefire.

13. (C) S/E Gration told the Egyptians that after he gets a ceasefire and political framework set up for Darfur, he wanted to focus on the "important issue" of CPA implementation, and the resolution of North-South issues including border demarcation, preparing for elections in 2010 and the referendum in 2011, and a wealth-sharing arrangement after 2011. He told the Egyptians that he wanted to convene a conference with those that signed the CPA to "recommit" all parties to the principles contained in the agreement. S/E Gration stated that South Sudan is not ready for independence. There is a lack of leaders and institutions, no rule of law or agri-business development, and 85 percent of the people are illiterate.

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Soliman Focuses on Need to Create "One Sudan"  
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14. (C) Soliman told Gration that the Government of Egypt (GOE) is concerned about the stability of Sudan. Egypt feels that both northern and southern leaders are preparing for separation. Soliman said that the GOE has good relations with both the Government of Sudan (GOS) and the Government of South Sudan (GOSS) and could work with both countries. However, he believes that if separation comes Sudan will not be stable and we will see a return of fighting. Soliman said this conflict would include North-South fighting over petroleum resources, as well as South-South violence. He opined that current GOSS President Salva Kiir did not have the ability of the late John Garang to hold the South unified or convince southerners of the importance of unity, and he

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was skeptical that Kiir could play a significant role in maintaining the unity of Sudan.

15. (C) Soliman told Gration that Egypt has spent money and effort in southern Sudan to create "one Sudan." He said that Egypt built four power stations and a medical clinic in the south, and is encouraging Arab investment in the south (reftels A-C). If South Sudan chooses separation, he said, Arab investment will cease. EGIS is working with Dinka and Nuer leaders in southern Sudan to convince them that "unity is in their interests and separation would be a disaster." He also stated that the GOE is working to encourage northern leaders to implement the CPA and work out integration issues with the southern leaders. Soliman told Khartoum that holding back on development and integration, until the GOS is convinced that Sudan will remain unified, is a "bad policy."

16. (C) Despite Egyptian efforts, the EGIS chief thinks the chances for unity are only 50-50. The big question, Soliman said, is who will participate in the referendum. He said of the 4 million potential voters, 1.5 million live in Khartoum, and EGIS assumes they would vote for unity because they don't want to return to the south. Soliman believes that the crisis in Darfur took the GOS' attention away from integration with the South. He agreed with S/E Gration that Darfur needs to be settled so we can focus attention on the importance of North-South relations.

17. (C) On Darfur, Soliman stated that Egypt played a role in the unifying many of Darfuri rebel groups in Juba, and the GOE was working to address the humanitarian problems. The GOE feels that the current Darfur peace process should not focus on Khalil Ibrahim because Egypt does not want to see a repeat of Abuja, when only Minni Minawi signed the peace deal. Soliman told Gration that it is important to let other leaders know that they are not out of the process. He expressed doubts about the usefulness of an interim ceasefire, predicting the rebels will only use the time to prepare for the next round of fighting. However, Soliman agreed with Gration that a stop in fighting was urgent and that it should be followed by Darfur-Darfur peace talks.

¶8. (SBU) Soliman stated that it was a "great honor" to work with S/E Gration. He believes that Gration "fully understands" the importance of unity in Sudan and realizes that it is in both Egyptian and U.S. interests that Sudan does not fail.

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Aboul Gheit Gives GOE's Views on Unity, Darfur  
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¶9. (C) In a separate meeting, FM Aboul Gheit told S/E Gration that Sudan is passing through its most difficult time since independence. He stated that the salvation of Sudan will come through "committed unity," and if unity is absent the enter region will experience major difficulties. He told Gration that the GOE is building power stations and hospitals to make unity appealing and allow the south to be self-sustaining (reftels A-C). He asked the U.S. to either put resources directly into the southern Sudan, or work with Egypt, which has people on the ground, to provide assistance.

¶10. (C) In the foreign minister's analysis Darfur suffers from historical marginalization due to Khartoum's focus on the south. He suggested that we need to press the tribes to move. However, Aboul Gheit mentioned that focusing on the Zaghawa and Khalil Ibrahim may leave others out. He said an interim ceasefire would have little benefit because there was almost no fighting on the ground. Aboul Gheit stated that there needs to be a political framework agreement with the multiple Darfuri rebel groups. He agreed with S/E Gration that the problems between Sudan and Chad must be controlled because they exacerbate the situation in Darfur, but he expressed doubts about the French willingness to press Chadian President Deby. Aboul Gheit approved of Libya's involvement in a solution in Sudan because Tripoli has good relations with many rebel groups. He was not in favor of Qatari involvement in Darfur, stating that they were just "rich guys" to finance a deal, but they cannot manage the diplomacy, and have no experience in, or knowledge of Sudan. Aboul Gheit asked S/E Gration to restrain Doha and to realize the important role of Egypt in a comprehensive deal on Sudan.

¶11. (C) Egypt recently sent 60 doctors to Darfur to help fill the humanitarian gap left by the expulsion of the international NGOs (reftel C). Aboul Gheit told Gration that the ICC arrest warrant needed to be dealt with because the GOS will not be at ease as long the ICC remains a threat.

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Rebel leaders, he said, will not seriously negotiate because they believe the ICC has given them a "golden opportunity" to bring down Bashir. Aboul Gheit stated that Bashir is the "balancer of many things" in Sudan and working with him will pay off, but will take time.

¶12. (C) Aboul Gheit reiterated the GOE's proposal for an international conference of experts on Sudan (reftel C-D) to "work together" on a comprehensive solution, instead of having many plans that would come together "piece-meal." MFA Cabinet officer for African Affairs Ahmed Abu Zeid described Egypt's proposal as a "package deal" for Darfur and all of Sudan, and he opined that the Doha process was not inclusive and was falling apart.

¶13. (U) S/E Gration's staff cleared this message.  
SCOBAY